

R. J. Gaskins
C

20 November 1953

Memorandum for: Deputy Director/Plans

Subject: Congressional Visit to RFE/Munich

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1. I talked with Dr. Walter Besterman, Counsel to the Immigration Subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee. Dr. Besterman has just returned from a trip to Europe with the Committee Chairman and several of the Committee members who were abroad looking into refugee and immigration matters. While in Munich, they visited the Radio Free Europe installation and were interviewed by the desk heads for statements for re-broadcast. Dr. Besterman informs me that the Committee was extremely well impressed with RFE and everything about it. Mr. [redacted] made a particularly good impression on the group and Dr. Besterman had high praise for the young man who conducted the proceedings but whose name he had unfortunately forgotten. Chairman Reed was so pleased that he has just reminded Dr. Besterman to prepare a letter of appreciation for the Chairman's signature to [redacted]

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2. After the Committee had been to RFE, the VOA and Consulate people in Munich requested that the Committee repeat the performance for VOA but time would not permit. In addition, several of the Committee members, including Besterman, are rather prejudiced against VOA. Nevertheless, the VOA people sent a man with recording equipment to Venice to get the Congressional statements which Dr. Besterman felt was rather silly. He asked me, "Does VOA have to do everything that RFE does?"

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3. It should be noted that in the course of the Congressional visit to RFE, Congresswoman Thompson inquired as to whether there were any Federal funds in the operation and she was told that there were not.

Walter L. Pforzheimer
Legislative Counsel

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